

THE STORY
of
ESTES PARK

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ENOS A. MILLS

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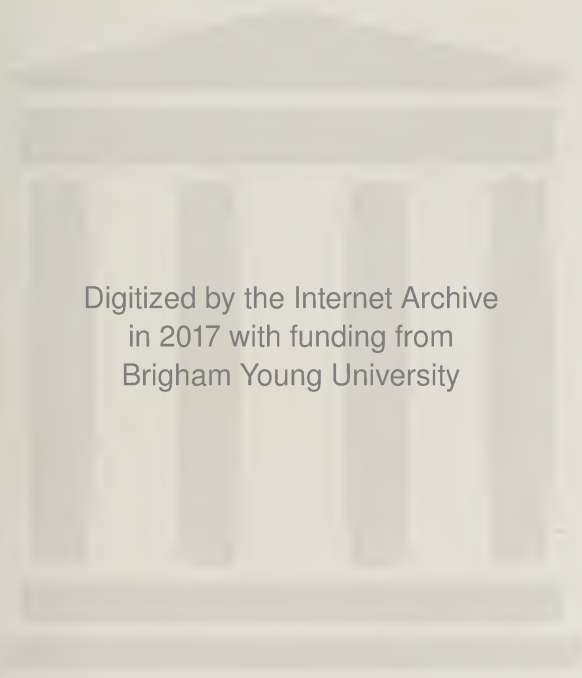
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Estes Park and Long's Peak from Bierstadt Rock

The Story of Estes Park

By ENOS A. MILLS

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Third Edition

Revised and Enlarged

Ninety Cents.

Published by the Author

Longs Peak, Estes Park, Colorado

"Within the district treated we will scarcely be able to find a region so favorably distinguished as that presented by Estes Park. Not only has nature amply supplied this valley with features of rare beauty and surroundings of admirable grandeur, but it has thus distributed them that the eye of an artist may rest with perfect satisfaction on the complete picture presented."—Dr. F. V. Hayden, father of the Yellowstone National Park, in U. S. Geological Survey of Colorado, 1875.

"Never, nowhere, have I seen anything equal to the view in Estes Park," writes Isabella L. Bird—"A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains"—1879.

In an admirable description of the Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, region, Mr. Robert B. Marshall, Chief Geographer of the United States Geological Survey, says: "The region as a whole is as beautiful as any to be found in the United States, or, indeed, in the world."

Says F. H. Chapin in "Mountaineering in Colorado," "I would not fail to impress on the mind of the tourist that the scenes are too grand for words to convey a true idea of their magnificence. Let him, then, not fail to visit them."

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PREFACE

In the forewords to *The Story of Estes Park and a Guide Book*, which the author brought out in 1905, was the following paragraph :

"This booklet is not the work of a scholar, but of a guide. It is written because a guide book is needed, and for the purpose of conveniently recording the story of Estes Park." It is the hope of the author that all historic localities in the west will have their story written before the pioneers and other sources of information have vanished.

In this, the third edition, the *Guide Book* is omitted, and the original *Story of Estes Park*, with but few changes in the former text, brought down to date.

In this, "*The Story of Estes Park*," I have quoted extracts from "*A Ragged Register*," by Miss Anna E. Dickinson, through the courtesy of Harper and Brothers, and from "*A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*," by Isabella L. Bird. This, as well as the first edition, is inscribed to ROBERT W. JOHNSON.

ENOS A. MILLS.

THE STORY OF ESTES PARK

CHAPTER ONE

Estes Park was named in honor of Joel Estes who established the first permanent settlement in 1860. It is probable that Kit Carson and his band of trappers were the first white men to visit Estes Park and through it they appear to have trapped in 1840.

Joel Estes, like Boone, enjoyed being far from his neighbors, and came to Colorado from Arkansas. One autumn day while hunting, in 1859, he ascended Park Hill and from this had the wonderful view down into Estes Park. He at once returned to the foothills for Mrs. Estes and early in 1860 they moved into the Park with their effects upon two pack horses. They came in mostly "for hunting and prospecting." A cabin was built on Willow Creek, about one block north of the "ranch house" and close to the place where this brook is crossed by the Loveland road.

In 1861 they brought in a two-wheeled cart. Except while away on a visit to Arkansas in 1863, the Estes family made the Park their home until the summer of 1866.



Mr. and Mrs. Milton Estes; Charles F. Estes, first white child born in Estes Park
Mr. and Mrs. Joel Estes

In the spring of 1861, Milton Estes, then twenty-one, journeyed to Fort Lupton and wedded Miss Mary L. Flemming, who had come to Colorado in 1859, at the age of seventeen. They moved to the Park at once and on the birth of Charles F. Estes, February 19, 1865, became the parents of the first white child born in the Park. Mr. and Mrs. Estes still live, and from their lips I heard the story of their Estes Park life. They have promised to put their recollections into writing.

When Estes first came to the Park he saw new lodge poles and other recent Indian signs, but, so far as known, no Indians have been in the Park since the white man came. In the summer of 1860, in a gulch about one-half mile south of Mary Lake, Milton Estes captured a black Indian pony. Straggling arrow heads have been found over the Park, and to the northwest of Moraine Park there used to be a tumbled stone collection that was spoken of as "the ruins of an old Indian fort."

The Estes families lived the simple life. Twice each year they went to the Denver post-office for their mail. On these eventful trips, which were made during the spring and fall, they took a small quantity of fish, game or hides to market.



Old Half Way House Between Denver and Estes Park

For fifty years the home of Chester L. Smead. In this Miss Anna E. Dickinson, Helen Hunt, Miss Isabella Bird, Dr. F. V. Hayden, Lord Dunraven, Albert Bierstadt and Rocky Mountain Jim have been entertained.

On the St. Vrain River Near Lyons

Mrs. Milton Estes not only had a cheerful disposition, but was an excellent cook and house-keeper. Every day at regular hours, she served three good meals. The ordinary meal consisted of venison, mutton, or trout, hot biscuits, butter, berries, coffee and plenty of cream. Cooking was done over the fire-place in kettles, pans and in a dutch oven. Eagle wings oft-times served for brooms, and pitch pine in the fire-place generally furnished the light.

Sundays and holidays were scarcely noticed—every day was their best day. They were healthy, contented, and even happy. They were at home three years before the first visitors—some tourist campers—called. One day little George Estes fell and dislocated an arm, but as doctors were out of the question, the children of the pioneers established the custom of keeping well—a custom still closely followed by Park children. The Estes children had some pet cats and a dog, Mage, that caught fish. With sticks, rocks, sheep and elk horns for toys, the children spent the days happily. All the children were proud of their buckskin moccasins, and the little folks wore dresses that were made of flour sacks.

One of the Estes children became a physician, another served in the Iowa Legislature,

and Charles F. Estes is at present working in Boulder, Colorado.

Reviewing her pioneer life, from the distance of forty years, Mrs. Milton Estes said: "We kept well, enjoyed the climate, had plenty of fun, were monarch of all we surveyed, had no taxes, and were contented as long as we remained—but I wish I had pictures of ourselves in those old days and clothes—how we must have looked!"

Several people who called upon the Estes, while they were monarch of all they surveyed, left written words of praise for their hospitality and jolly nature.

Among the campers who came in during the summer of 1865 were Rev. and Mrs. Richardson, and one August day of this summer he preached in the Estes cabin to ten listeners. Rev. Richardson was a Methodist.

Early in the winter of 1865-6 a deep snow fell over the Park and the entire winter continued cold and snowy. The Estes began to long for warmer climes and scenes more remote, so early in the spring of 1866 they sold out and moved away, and none of them has ever come back. Joel Estes died in New Mexico, in 1875; his wife in Iowa, in 1882. Mr. and Mrs. Milton Estes are alive and for the past few years have

been dividing their time between their comfortable homes in Denver, and El Paso, Texas.

The Estes families abdicated their scenic throne for one of the following considerations: Fifty dollars, a yearling steer, or a yoke of oxen. It is impossible to say which one of these is correct, but had Michael Hollenbeck given them all of these he had become monarch dirt cheap.

In a few months a Mr. Jacobs gave \$250 for the claim, but in a short time it was acquired by a regular Robinson Crusoe of a character called "Buckskin." Late in 1867 the Estes claim came under the control of Griff Evans, and in due course lost its identity by becoming some of the acres of the Earl of Dunraven.

By 1867 many of the English tongue who were interested in scenery, trout, elk, beaver or stock raising, were repeating agreeable stories concerning Estes Park. For five years hunters, tourists, trappers and homeseekers came and went. But in 1867. Griff Evans founded the first permanent settlement by coming to stay—and by staying for nearly a score of years.

In 1868, "Rocky Mountain Jim"—James Nugent—piled his shack in Muggins gulch, and that year Israel Rowe, hunter and discoverer of Gem lake, built a cabin near the present home



The Summit of Long's Peak

of F. W. Crocker, a short distance southwest of the foot of Mount Olympus; and this year Charles W. Dennison, who caused the first death in the Park, built a log house about midway between the cabins of Rowe and Evans. And this year, too, "Muggins"—George Hearst—pastured his cattle in Muggins gulch on the present Meadow Dale stock ranch. It may have been this year that the first flock of "hoofed locusts"—sheep—were brought in. These sheep were corralled in a stockade each night, but this did not prevent mountain lions from leaping in and having fresh mutton regularly.

CHAPTER TWO

LONG'S PEAK

Come to yon lofty mountain's tow'ring height,
Whose burnished brow beats back the golden light
Of morning sun, nor stay thine upward flight
Till thou hast caught the glory and the might
Of his calm Majesty.

Leave all thy common thoughts behind,
Thy petty cares, thy strifes, thy fears,
And breathing here the unsullied air
That softly now from heaven's blue vault
In freshness blows, uplift thy soul
To Nature's high communion.

O Altar Grand!

To that great Mystery that dwells in all,
What fiery furnace fused thy parts,
In what titanic forge wert thou rough shaped,
By what stupendous hand erected!
Upon thy face, with curious tools,
The savage tempests graved a multitude
Of sculptured forms; the baneful lightnings
Scarred thy beaten front, and all thy sides
Are marked and furrowed by the torrents' tides;
Yet calm, serene, in placid grandeur,
Now thou stand'st,
A monument to Nature's laws,
An Altar to her God!

August, 1910.

J. J. P. ODELL,

Long's Peak caught the eye of Lieutenant Pike one November day, 1806, when he was far out on the plains exploring his way westward. In recording the discovery in his journal he mentions it as "Great Peak."

An exploring party sent out by President Madison came in sight of Great Peak on June 30, 1819. While this exploring party was in camp at the mouth of the Poudre on July 3, 1819, its members named Long's Peak in honor of their commander, Col. S. H. Long. The Pike exploring party were the first to see Long's Peak; and some of the Long party were the first to scale Pike's Peak. But neither Pike nor Long was upon the peak that bears his name.

In the "Oregon Trail" Dr. Parkman records that he saw Long's Peak in 1845.

The first attempt to climb Long's seems to have been made in August, 1864, by the man who first scaled Mount of the Holy Cross and who named Estes Park—W. N. Byers, founder of the Rocky Mountain News. With three companions, Mr. Byers scaled Mount Meeker and went some distance through the Keyhole on the present trail of Long's. The attempt was unsuccessful, and on the 20th of August, 1864,



L. W. Keplinger

Prominent member of the first party
that climbed Long's Peak

Mr. Byers wrote: "We have been almost all around the peak and we are quite sure that no living creature, unless it had wings to fly, was ever upon its summit. We believe we run no risk in predicting that no man will ever be, though it is barely possible that the ascent can be made."

Four years later the intrepid Mr. Byers broke his own prediction by leading a party of climbers to the top. "On August 23, 1868, the first ascent of Long's Peak was made. The persons who made it were: Maj. J. W. Powell, W. H. Powell, L. W. Keplinger, Samuel Gorman, Ned E. Farrell, John C. Sumner and William N. Byers." "There was not the slightest indication that human foot ever trod the summit before." This party made barometric and other observations and built the large cairn on the southeast corner of the summit.

In making this ascent the climbers started from Grand Lake and rode to timberline on the west side of the range, about ten miles southwest of the peak. Here they were compelled to leave their horses.

They spent an entire day trying to climb Long's over the thin, jagged ledge that connects it with the main range. Failing, they descended



A Young Grizzly Bear

to timberline on the St. Vrain, and made camp for the night a short distance north of Sandbeach Lake. Near their camp numerous bears were feeding on the myriads of grasshoppers that had chilled and fallen in crossing the cold, snowy range. It was one of the years that Colorado was afflicted with a locust plague.

The afternoon that camp was made Mr. L. W. Keplinger concluded to make a try for the top. After hours of hard climbing he at last gained the Notch, the opening in the Meeker ridge which is about one hundred feet below the summit. Darkness coming on he was compelled to return to camp without reaching the top but he had found the way to it. The following day he went up with the others. Forty years later he returned and again climbed to the summit.

The following morning all set out for the summit guided by Keplinger. The night was cloudy, but "unexpectedly the day dawned fair," and the low drifting clouds cleared away as they climbed. The southerly slope up which they climbed is in places akin to a precipice, and in two places they found the way barely possible and perilously steep, but the summit was reached without accident. After some

exploring, Mr. Byers saw a way—the present one—by which one can go from the summit to the place where he had been, four years before near Keyhole.

Mr. Byers' account of this successful climb had hardly been published in the *Rocky Mountain News*, when three men and a woman set up a claim of earlier ascent. After long and careful investigation, I think that the Byers party were the first on the summit of Long's Peak.

In all probability the first woman on Long's was the celebrated lecturer, Miss Anna E. Dickinson. This was in September, 1871, and possibly was by moonlight. Both Mr. and Mrs. Evans, who came to the Park one year before the first men were on the peak, and who lived in the Park for many years, are positive that Miss Dickinson was the first woman on Long's. Miss Dickinson made the climb as the guest of Professor Hayden of the United States Geological Survey. The night after the climb the Hayden party camped at timberline, at the point touched by the present trail up Long's. While in this camp the party seem to have named the companion peaks—Mount Lady Washington and Mount Meeker—of Long's.

Miss Dickinson wrote the following concerning the evening's experiences by the timberline camp fire:

"We were taken in hand by the Hayden party, thereby gaining the experience and memory of Long's Peak, and the companionship through a few days of men who ought to be immortal if superhuman perseverance and courage are guarantees of immortality.

. . . "I looked at all the little party, with ardent curiosity and imagination, braving rain, snow, sleet, hail, hunger, thirst, exposure, bitter nights, snow climbs, dangers of death, sometimes a score on a single mountain—for the sake not of a so-called great cause, not in hot blood, but with still patience and unwearied energy for an abstract science—no more, since the majority can not work even for fame.

"We sat around the great camp fire that was kept heaped with whole trunks of dead trees, and watched the splendors of sun-setting till they were all gone, and, these vanished, sat on by the blazing fire by the solemn, stately majesties, talking of many things—strange stories of adventure in the mountains and gorge, climbs through which a score of times life had suspended simply on strength of fingers, nice



Carlyle Lamb

An early guide on Long's Peak. Was
the guide who accompanied Miss Welton

poise on a hand ledge thrust out into eternity, wild tales of frontier struggles, intricacies of science, discussions of human life and experience in crowded cities, devotion and enthusiasm shown in any cause—all things, in fact, that touch the brain and soul, the heart and life, of mortals who really live, and do not merely exist. A talk worth climbing that height to have and to hold."

In August, 1871, Rev. E. J. Lamb, the first regular guide on Long's, made his first ascent, and in coming down, descended the "east precipice," a feat but once repeated—by Enos A. Mills in June, 1903.

Early in October, 1873, the peak was climbed by four people not unknown to fame. They were Miss Bird, ex-Mayor Platt Rogers of Denver, Judge S. S. Downer of Boulder and "Rocky Mountain Jim." In January, 1905, Mr. Rogers wrote for this book an account of his experiences in making the climb. The account pictures characters and portrays conditions in a masterly manner. Here is his sketch:

"In September, 1873, S. S. Downer (now Judge Downer of Boulder) and I rode across country from Greeley to Estes Park and we stopped for the night at Longmont.

"The proprietor of the hotel, learning our destination, asked that a lady, then at the hotel, might accompany us. We are not at all partial to such an arrangement as we were traveling light and free and the presence of a woman would naturally operate as a restraint upon our movements. However, we could not refuse, and we consoled ourselves with the hope that she would prove young, beautiful, and vivacious. Our hopes were dispelled when, in the morning, Miss Bird appeared, wearing bloomers, riding cowboy fashion, with a face and figure not corresponding to our ideals.

"Our progress was slow, as she rode a pony of no considerable speed, and it was well along in the afternoon when we came upon the cabin of Nugent, locally known as "Rocky Mountain Jim," in Muggins gulch. Jim came out and engaged us in conversation, his one eye, long hair and leather costume giving him a picturesque air—such an air as delights the romantic female heart.

"Miss Bird was interested if not impressed, and when Jim gave her some beaver pads, which had been hanging against his cabin, she was quite ready to accept him at his own valuation. He rode with us part of the way into the

Park and I observed then as I did several times after, that in looking at his face from the side of his good eye, he came very near reproducing the conventional profile of Shakespeare. I forbore mentioning this resemblance to him as his vanity was already complete.

“The only habitable, if not the only inhabited, cabin in the Park at that time, was that of Griff Evans, and this was our destination. I can not speak of Griff without paying tribute to his genial, kindly nature, which it was my privilege to enjoy upon several subsequent occasions.

“It was the last of September and the days were delicious. Except for the fence about the meadow in front of his cabin, the Park was untouched by the hand of the settler, and we were free to range it in every direction. Mountain sheep and other large game could be seen in the morning coming down to water.

“We spent our time generally in riding with Griff along the streams and over the hills looking up his cattle—Miss Bird always being one of the party.

“Although it was very late in the season, she wanted to climb Long’s Peak. She was continuously being reminded of experiences in the Sandwich Islands and the event of her



At Timberline, About 11,300 Feet

travels seemed to have been the ascent of the volcano of Kilauea. Now, the only guides to the peak in those days were Griff and Jim and each held in contempt and derision the trail used by the other in making the ascent. Miss Bird wanted Jim, and Mr. Downer was finally persuaded to ride over to Muggins gulch, see him and make the necessary arrangement. Jim came, according to arrangement, riding a solid little pony and followed by his dog, Ring. Griff rendered us great assistance by cautioning Downer and me to keep our whiskey flasks from Jim, whose worthlessness in the presence of liquor was well known to him.

"We started early in the day and made camp at timberline, just opposite a tremendous snowbank on the slope of the peak. We spent the evening before the camp fire, very much after the manner described in her book. Jim was resourceful, romantic, and reminiscent. His adventure with the bear in Middle Park, which cost him his eye, was elaborated for Miss Bird's benefit, and all the doggerel which he had composed in the loneliness of Muggins gulch was recited by him. The principal theme of his poems was himself, varied by references to a fair maiden, of whom he seemed to be enamored,

and who we afterwards learned, was Griff Evans' daughter.

"We were up before sunrise the next morning. Miss Bird mounted her pony and the rest walked. When we reached the lava beds she could ride no further and her horse was lariatied. After passing the notch* Downer and I had a controversy with Jim as to the best way to get over the slide. He insisted on going to the bottom near the head waters of the Big Thompson, and then climbing again until Keyhole was reached. Downer and I thought we could reach the Keyhole directly and without the long descent and arduous climb. Miss Bird attached herself to Jim and we went our respective ways, Downer and I reaching the Keyhole while Jim and Miss Bird were somewhere in the gulch below. This made a long wait, and when they finally came up with us she was so fagged that she was unable to make her way unaided up the last slope to the peak. By alternately pulling and pushing her and stimulating her with snow soaked with Jamaica ginger, we got her to the top. We were then so late that we could

*The lava beds are now Boulderfield; the notch, Keyhole; while the Keyhole here referred to is the top of the trough.
—Mills.

remain but a short time, and we started on our return in the early afternoon. Jim insisted on the miserable trail he had followed in coming, and consequently he and Miss Bird floundered in the depths of the gulch once more while Downer and I returned by the upper and more direct trail, which necessitated another wait on our part at the lava beds. When Jim got her to the top again she was unable to mount her horse. She was therefore lifted on and practically held on until we got to camp, where she was lifted off; in fact she was completely 'done.' We passed another night there and the following day returned to Griff's cabin.

"Miss Bird was quite taken with Jim, who represented himself as the son of an English army officer who had been stationed somewhere in Canada, and he made some pretensions to a former state of refinement. She was disposed to resent our want of faith in him and the jolly-ing we felt compelled to give him.

"Downer and I looked upon her somewhat in the light of an encumbrance, though when her book was published we realized that we had had the great good fortune to travel with a woman whose ability to describe the manifold beauties of Estes Park has never been excelled.



Aspen Cut by Beaver

She was a thoroughly disciplined and observant traveler, although of too light a build to perform of her own strength the task she had set for herself.

"Her physical unattractiveness, which so influenced us when we first met her, was really more than compensated for by a fluent and graphic pen, which made the mountains as romantic and beautiful as doubtless were her own thoughts."

Concerning their first evening at timberline, Miss Bird says:

"The long shadows of the pines lay upon the frosted ground, an aurora leaped fitfully, and the moonlight, though intensely bright, was pale beside the red, leaping flames of our pine logs and their red glow on our gear, ourselves, and Ring's truthful face. One of the young men (Rogers and Downer) sang a Latin student's song and two negro melodies; the other 'Sweet Spirit Hear My Prayer.' Jim sang one of Moore's melodies in a singular falsetto, and all together sang, 'The Star Spangled Banner' and 'Red, White and Blue.' Then Jim recited a clever poem of his own composition, and told some fearful Indian stories."

Many people in the early seventies appear

to have climbed Long's and to have written their experience for publication, for in September, 1874, the editor of the *Boulder News*, in declining an account, says: "The Long's Peak communication is decidedly well written but the subject is threadbare."

On September 23, 1884, Miss Carrie J. Welton, an eccentric, cultured and wealthy young lady from Massachusetts, who had given enormous sums of money to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, perished at Keyhole on her way down from the summit. She gave out at the Trough, but the guide, Carlyle Lamb, succeeded in getting her as far down as Keyhole, where he, at her urgent request, left her and went to Long's Peak house for help. He left her about nine o'clock at night, and it was almost morning before he could get back to her through the cold, windy night with assistance. Then she was dead. Over-exertion, together with the cold had killed her. She did not freeze to death. On the way up the weather was cold and windy and at Keyhole the guide, noticing how weak she was, suggested that they turn back. She declined, saying that she had never undertaken anything without going through with it. The guide

should have refused to go farther. Guides on mountain peaks must sometimes become imperators. Rebecca Morrow Reavis wrote a fairly accurate account, in verse, of the last climb of Miss Welton, together with a worthy tribute to her. The poem embraces twenty-two stanzas. Here is the fifteenth:

“Ah, sweet maiden, thus you parted
From the world's dull care and strife,
Leaving loved ones broken-hearted,
While you enter higher life.
You have reached the distant summit;
You have reached the treasured goal,
And your spirit reaching from it,
Still upbears your noble soul.”

The trail has had not only its quarrels and tragedies, but its comedies and romances. Early in the writer's guiding experience he one day set off for the summit with a party of young people, two of whom met for the first time on the morning of the climb; but their brief acquaintance did not prevent their becoming engaged before the summit of the peak was reached, and thirty days after this engagement they were married.

In the summer of 1892 a rock-rolling climber accidentally dropped his revolver, which exploded, and gave him a mortal wound.



A New Beaver Dam

One August night in 1896, the first moonlight climb was made by H. C. Rogers, and the first winter climb by Enos A. Mills in February, 1903. Miss Lucy W. Evans made a night climb in August, 1903. In August, 1904, Professor S. A. Farrand, aged seventy-four, and Ethel Husted, aged ten, climbed unassisted to the summit. Mrs. E. J. Lamb climbed unassisted to the summit on her seventieth birthday.

During the summers of 1901-2 Professor L. G. Carpenter, together with engineering students from the Colorado Agricultural College, Jackson, True, Lamb and Richardson, determined the altitude, 14,256 feet, by running a line of levels from a U. S. G. S. bench mark in Estes Park.

CHAPTER THREE

BIG GAME

Estes Park was abundantly stocked with game. Sheep, deer, bear, and lion were formerly plentiful, and elk roamed by the hundred. "It is a good thing we did not have modern guns," said Milton Estes, "or we would have had too much time on our hands." In 1871, while a boarder was eating breakfast at Evans,' the hired man asked Evans, "What shall I kill to-day; elk, deer or sheep?" Thousands of elk horns were strewn over the park up to the early nineties. Fortunately for the park, mountain lions made early sheep ranging unprofitable. During the autumn of 1885 the manager of the Dunraven ranch offered \$50 for the death of a stock-killing grizzly.

The Rocky Mountain News of September 26, 1896, contains the following: "In Estes Park the usual routine of cards, drives, and dances was broken this week by the trapping of a bear. On last Sunday night a bear killed a steer belonging to Dr. James. This was discovered the following day and a gigantic steel

bear trap set by the carcass and fastened to a small eighteen-foot log. The next night the bear returned for a rare steak and plunged his foot into the trap, and dragged it and the log to which it was fastened, to a small lake near by. The next morning a few guests from Elkhorn Lodge visited the point of interest and found the bear sitting in the lake with his head covered with blood. The bear greeted his visitors so passionately that they flew down the mountain, never stopping until they met reinforcements. The party now consisted of about twenty-five men, women, and children, armed with rifles and kodaks. Another advance was made, and a halt was not called until they were very near the bear, which was now on dry ground. Kodaks were aimed and the hands holding them were about as quiet as a seismograph in an earthquake. It was a case of shaking before taking, while taking, and after taking, too. The bear evidently thought it was the pressing opportunity of his life, and charged the group. None belonged to the standing army. There was a stampede. Ladies and gentlemen trod on each other's heels; they tripped one another; they fell over logs in a confused manner and tore madly through the bushes. Miss



A Rocky Mountain Sheep

James made a mistake and ran toward the bear. Discovering her mistake just as the bear was about to embrace his opportunity, she turned, caught her dress, and for a moment was in great danger. At last some one discovered that the bear had stopped. The stampeders stopped in order of lung capacity. The trap, chain and log had entangled among some aspens and held the bear fast. The bear weighed 800 pounds and measured eight feet from tip to tip."

Mary Lake, with its alkaline shore, has long been the Mecca for mountain sheep, and hundreds of these proud, graceful animals have been killed near it. As late as 1896, the writer has seen young lambs, ewes, and old rams sporting, resting and posing on Sheep rock and other rocks near the lake. Sheep still frequent this place. In the spring of 1903 an old ram became entangled by his horns in a wire fence just above the lake, and struggled until the barbs cut his throat so that he bled to death. It was a humiliating death for one of the proudest, boldest of animals.



A Beaver House in Winter

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN

In the autumn and early winter of 1872, Earl Dunraven, with his guests, Sir William Cummings and Earl Fitzpatrick, shot big game in the park. Dunraven was so delighted with the abundance of game and the beauty and grandeur of the scenes that he determined to have Estes Park as a game preserve.

His agent at once set to work to secure the land. Men were hired to file on claims, and ultimately about 14,000 acres were supposed to have been secured from the government.

In 1874, Albert Bierstadt, the celebrated artist, came in as the guest of Dunraven, and at once selected sites for Dunraven's cottage and the Estes Park hotel. Bierstadt was delighted with Estes Park, and made the second trip to it. Here he made many sketches and secured material for some of his famous pictures. His favorite place was on the shore of the lake which now bears his name. A painting of Long's Peak from Bierstadt Lake for years hung in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington.

Meantime, many of Dunraven's land claims were contested. His agent had secured much of the land by loose or fraudulent methods and some by bullying homeseekers. R. Q. McGregor and others contested the twenty-one original claims. The contestants claimed that "these twenty-one claims had been entered by not more than five or six men; that the claimants had never lived on the land; that there was neither house nor fence—nor any improvement on any of the land." There are three "old timers" still living in the Park, who insist that the greater portion of Dunraven's land was fraudulently secured. Dunraven came out with about 8,000 acres, but his agent claimed something like 15,000, and for many years controlled that amount.

Trouble concerning land titles, the rapid slaughter of game by both tourists and settlers, and other reasons finally led Lord Dunraven to give up the game preserve idea.

CHAPTER FIVE

SETTLEMENT

The first death in the Park seems to have been that of Charles D. Miller—for whom the Miller Fork was named—who was accidentally shot by Charles W. Dennison. The second death was that of a climber on Mount Olympus who accidentally shot himself. He was buried on the south side of the Thompson, just below the mouth of Fall river.

The Chicago Tribune of August 15, 1871, had this communication: "Mr. Evans and others contemplate putting up a cheap hotel for next season. . . . I see no reason why this can not be made a prosperous resort, worth a dozen Saratogas to the invalid. . . . But no one should come in a wagon, as a pony or mule is the best, allowing the trip to be made in a day from Longmont."

Prof. F. V. Hayden, at the head of the United States Geological Survey, did some work in the park in September, 1871. In his report for 1875, referring to Estes Park, he says: "Not only has nature amply supplied this valley



Former Toll Gate on the Road About Midway Between the Park and Lyons

with features of rare beauty and surroundings of admirable grandeur, but it has thus distributed them that the eye of an artist may rest with perfect satisfaction on the complete picture presented."

In 1872, while F. W. Crocker and Rev. Washington McClintock were camping in the park, they noticed that the bill of fare of a nearby tent neighbor was very scanty, so one evening Rev. McClintock carried over some of their superabundance of trout and tactfully offered them to the tent people, but was repulsed by a garrulous woman who demanded if they were dressed. "Good evening, madame." Neither the disposition of trout nor the thoughts of the reverend gentleman are recorded.

In 1874, a stage line was established between the park and Longmont, and the same year Mr. and Mrs. R. Q. McGregor came in and located at Black canon, where Mrs. McGregor became postmaster the next year. In 1876 the postoffice was transferred to the ranch house and Mrs. Evans became postmaster. John T. Cleave became postmaster during 1877 but did not move the office to the present location, at the junction of Fall river with the Thompson, until ten years later.



First Store and Postoffice Near Two Owls.

House in which First Estes Park Wedding
Took Place. Near Mary Lake.

During 1875, many came to stay. John Jones and John Hupp settled in Beaver Park; Abner E. Sprague and his parents in Moraine Park; H. W. Ferguson at the Highlands, and Rev. and Mrs. E. J. Lamb, after two weeks' chopping, got a wagon through to the present location of Long's Peak Inn. Mr. and Mrs. W. E. James came to Black canon, but moved and started Elkhorn Lodge in 1877. The Estes Park hotel was built and opened in 1877.

Each and all the early settlers had many strange and interesting experiences. They had the alert and character-building experiences of the pioneer. They had hard work, inconveniences, wild game, and occasionally hard times. But they did not then need sympathy, nor have they craved it since.

CHAPTER SIX

ROCKY MOUNTAIN JIM

James Nugent, "Rocky Mountain Jim," came to his death in the days of the pioneers, the only real Estes Park tragedy. Jim's associates, his uncertain and irregular past, his braggadocio, bravery, chivalry, liking for poetry, and writing of doggerel, his romantic association with Miss Bird, his debauches, moods, kind acts, his white mule, his picturesque dress, the cowardly manner in which he was shot and the dramatic manner of his death—all these make him the star character who has thus far played in Estes Park scenes. He may have been "a nephew of General Beauregard" and hailed from the South, but he also claimed to have been the "son of an English army officer stationed in Canada." Meddling parents with a lovely maiden in the background may have started him on his reckless way. He seems to have served with both the Hudson Bay and American Fur companies; seems to have bushwhacked in the Kansas "border warfare," and may have been with both Quantrell and Hamil-

ton. He seems to have come to Estes in 1868, and built his cabin in Muggins gulch. On the road from Estes Park to Lyons, his cabin stood at the mouth of the first gulch on the right as one descends Muggins gulch.

Jim hunted, trapped, kept a few cattle, and made frequent trips to Denver and Boulder. On a few of these trips he was drunk and quarrelsome, but generally he was jovial and generous. All old-timers along the way between the Park and Denver with whom I have talked, say that they were "always glad to see Jim and his white mule coming." The Boulder News of October 17, 1873, contains this item:

"'Rocky Mountain Jim' is talking of writing a book. Jim has, under a rough crest, no mean abilities, coupled with a heart that beats right, and if he writes a book we predict it will not be tedious and unreadable."

It is known that Jim had a mass of written matter just before he was shot, but I have failed to find any of it. The refrain of one of his love ditties was—

"While in Muggins Gulch not far away,
Lived a poor trapper."

"'Rocky Mountain Jim' came down from Estes Park last Tuesday, bringing along 300



"Granny Phair"

Mrs. S. S. Phair, a pioneer of 1874, who lived at the base of Mount Olympus for eighteen years.

pounds of trout, for a share of which he has our thanks. Jim never forgets a friend, nor enemy, either."—Boulder News, November 14, 1873.

After the custom of Indians, and like most guides and frontiersmen, Jim gave careful attention to publicity by acting as his own press agent. Concerning Jim, the following seem established: He was a braggart who had a big better, bashful nature; in readiness to die, he was brave as the bravest, though often a moral coward; was revengeful but generous; had a few enemies and many friends; paid his debts, wrote doggerel, was handsome and made some pretensions as a writer.

In Middle Park, July 6, 1871, he lost an eye, and very nearly lost his life, in a fight with a bear. While crawling upon some deer, near Grand lake, armed with only a revolver and knife, his dog came running up, closely pursued by a bear and her cubs. The bear at once turned on Jim, who fired four shots into her before she downed him; then with his knife he continued fighting until he became unconscious. He was lying in a pool of blood when he came to, and near by was the dead bear. He was very weak and terribly "chawed up." His left arm was dislocated, his scalp nearly torn off,

and one eye was missing. He crawled to his camp, mounted his faithful mule and started for Grand Lake. Twice he became unconscious and fell off. But when he revived each time, the mule was found grazing near by and was remounted with great pain and difficulty, and the journey continued. At Grand lake his yells for a time frightened the few settlers, who were expecting an Indian raid. When, at last, they ventured out and found Jim lying unconscious, one remarked: "Indians are 'round, sure; here is a man scalped." Two years later in Estes Park, Jim appeared to Miss Anna Dickinson, in this light: "'Rocky Mountain Jim' who having peregrinated up to see us, sat contentedly and looked at us with his one bright eye, finally in quaint language and with concise vividness narrating many a tale of bear and other desperate fights, one of which had two years before nearly ended his days—had broken his right arm, stove in three ribs, torn out his left eye, and 'chawed' him up generally, and yet left spirit and grit enough to tell a story well and to get through a close shave bravely."

The lines that follow are a condensation of what Miss Bird wrote concerning Jim: "Among the scrub not far from the track, was a

rude, black log cabin, with smoke coming out of the roof and window. It looked like the den of a wild beast. The mud roof was covered with lynx, beaver and other skins laid out to dry, beaver paws were pinned out on the logs, a part of a carcass of a deer hung at one end of the cabin, a skinned beaver lay in front of a heap of peltry just within the door, and antlers of deer and old horseshoes lay about the den. The den was dense with smoke and very dark, littered with hay, old blankets, powder flasks, old books and magazines, and relics of all kinds. The owner, a broad, thick-set man about middle height, with an old cap on his head, with a hunting suit falling almost to pieces, a digger's scarf knotted about his waist, a knife in his belt and a revolver sticking out of the breast pocket of his coat. His face was remarkable. He is a man about forty-five and must have been strikingly handsome. He had large gray-blue eyes, deeply set, a handsome, aquiline nose, a very handsome mouth. His face was smooth-shaven except for a dense mustache and imperial. Tawny hair in thin, uncared-for curls, fell over his collar. Desperado was written in large letters all over him. He had no better seat to offer me than a log, but he offered it with

graceful unconsciousness. I read my letter, "The Ascent of Long's Peak," and was sincerely interested with the taste and acumen of his criticism on the style. He is a true child of nature; his eye brightened and his whole face became radiant, and at last tears rolled down his cheek, when I read the account of the glory of the sunrise. He then read us a very able paper on Spiritualism which he was writing. He told stories of his early youth, and of a great sorrow which had led him to embark on a lawless and desperate life. His voice trembled and tears rolled down his cheek. Essentially an actor, was he, I wonder, posing on the previous day in the attitude of desperate remorse, to impose upon my credulity or frighten me; or was it a genuine and unpremeditated outburst of passionate regret for the life which he had thrown away? I cannot tell, but I think it was the last. . . . Yesterday a gentleman came who I thought was another stranger, strikingly handsome, well dressed, and barely forty, with sixteen shining gold curls falling down his collar—the redoubtable desperado. Evans courteously pressed him to stay and dine with us, and he showed singular conversational dexterity in talking with the stranger, who was a well-

informed man. I left on Birdie, Evans riding with me as far as Nugent's. I should not have been able to leave if Mr. Nugent had not offered his services (to take her over the snow-drifted roads and ice-covered streams to near Loveland). Evans said I could be safer and better cared for with no one. He added: 'His heart is good and kind, as kind a heart as ever beat. He's a great enemy of his own, but he's been living pretty quietly for the last four years.' The two men (Evans and Jim) shook hands kindly. Some months later 'Rocky Mountain Jim' fell by Evans' own hand—shot from Evans' doorstep while riding past his cabin."

Evans was drunk when he shot Jim, but the shooting was cowardly and uncalled for. The stories that Jim was in love with Evans' daughter, and that he insulted her, are stories that seem not to have become known until after the shooting. Evans and Jim were incompatible; both drank heavily at times, and they had several quarrels. Evans was associated with those who were scheming to secure fraudulently the whole of Estes Park for Lord Dunraven. Jim opposed his land scheme, and opposed it with threatening armed presence, and with his pen. At the time that Jim was shot he seemed

to be making a winning fight against the land scheme. Naturally the old-timers were with Jim, and a consensus of their opinions is that "English gold killed Jim for opposing the land scheme."

Evans told the writer that he shot Jim for insulting his daughter. But incidental remarks of Evans to the writer concerning the affair did not harmonize with the studied assertion. A claim is made that there was a woman in the case; a woman to whom the man behind Evans and Jim was paying attention. The common belief of the neighborhood at the time of the shooting was that "Evans was hired to do it." It does seem that Evans was only an agent when he did the shooting, but his hatred for Jim and the hatred of his backer, the land unpleasantry and whisky all combined in causing Evans to do the shooting.

A friend who was with Jim at the time of the shooting gave A. E. Sprague an account of it a day or two after it happened. Here is the substance of it: Jim and a friend were returning from a ride and stopped to water their horses at the little stream by Evans' house. Evans and Lord H. were in one of Evans' cabins drinking—possibly Evans was being toned up to do

the deed. When Jim left the stream Lord H., putting a double-barrel shotgun into Evans' hands, said: "I want you to protect me." Evans took the gun, and as Jim passed near, fired two shots in rapid succession, and without warning. The first shot probably missed Jim and hit an old stage coach that stood by; but Jim fell from his horse with a load of buckshot in his body as the result of the second shot. At the trial one witness swore that Lord H. said to Evans: "Give him another; he's not dead yet."

This fellow, Brown, who was with Jim at the time of the shooting, and who gave Mr. Sprague the above account of it, disappeared a few days after the shooting and has never been heard of since. It is probable that Lord H. paid this important witness to disappear.

For a time it appeared that Jim would recover. He wrote an account of the shooting for a Fort Collins paper, and in this stated that the land troubles were at the bottom of the shooting. Meantime Evans visited Jim and asked to be forgiven; Jim's reply is said to have been: "No, damn you, I'll forgive you with lead when I get well." Jim did not get well and the talk of the time was that the attending physician was hired to put him out of the way. Possibly public

opinion was correct, but it appears more probable "that a piece of buckshot that had lodged in Jim's skull had dropped in upon his brain," or that "the base of Jim's brain had become putrid from a piece of a buckshot that had entered it the day of the shooting."

Mrs. Griffith Evans asked me to say for her that while she regretted the killing of Rocky Mountain Jim, she could not blame her husband for the deed as it appeared to be a case of kill or be killed. At times Jim drank heavily and when drinking he frequently was quarrelsome. Both when he was drunk and when he was sober he had repeatedly threatened to kill Evans.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MISS ISABELLA BIRD

A number of things indicate that Miss Bird was deeply interested in Jim. During the closing years of her life she declined to write anything concerning the region and apparently avoided any discussion of it. Her biography by Anna M. Stoddart—John Murray, London, 1907, makes but extremely brief mention of Miss Bird's Estes Park experiences yet they were apparently as striking and eventful as any in her life. The letters which she wrote from here and afterwards published in "A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains" went through seven American editions and a number of editions in England.

Of this her biographer records: "'A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains' was on the point of publication in book form. Its appearance in *The Leisure Hour* had been most successful, and the editor of *The Spectator* had congratulated his contemporary on the privilege of publishing such papers, the interest of which, as he expressed it, 'intoxicated' him.

"This book appeared in October, a second edition was called for in November, and the

third appeared in January, 1880. It is easy to understand its charm, in spite of its being seven years old when it received its final form. Its matter is of the kind which 'age cannot wither nor custom stale,' for the human interest of the book is so strong and fresh that it overpowers the record of dangers overcome and nature surprised in her most inaccessible retreats.

"Dean Stanley told Mr. Murray that everybody asks everybody 'Have you read *The Rocky Mountains*?' "

Concerning their final parting and the influence on Miss Bird of the news of Jim's death, her biographer says: "Then they promised each other that after death, if it were permitted, the one would appear to the other. This parting gave her great pain but she felt that Mr. Nugent had undertaken to live a new life and that she could help him by prayer and her letters. Nearly a year had passed. Mr. Nugent's letters gave evidence of continued steadiness. Then suddenly on July 25, came the distressing news that he was dead . . . Miss Bird went to Switzerland full of the distressing conviction that Jim had died unrepentant and occupied with the remembrance of their mutual promise.

"From Hospenthal an almost immediate move was made to Interlaken and there one morning as she lay in bed half unnerved by the shock of his death and half expectant she saw Rocky Mountain Jim in his trapper's dress just as she had seen him last standing in the middle of the room. He bowed low to her and vanished. Then one of her friends came into the room and she told her what had just occurred. When exact news of his death arrived its date coincided with that of the vision."

Miss Bird, who visited the Park in 1873, was one of the world's greatest women travelers and is the author of many books of travel. She was a scholarly English woman, a nature lover and a woman of uncommon pluck. Anyone interested in Estes Park, or in a delightful book of travel, would do well to read her, "A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains," which for the most part is filled with her Estes Park experiences.

She came into the Park late in September and made her final leave early in December. The Evanses and others say that, for a time, she was in love with Rocky Mountain Jim. Jim was a picturesque and interesting fellow and might easily delight a young lady author with-

out her falling in love with him. He had been a scout, and was a bear killer, wore a showy costume, quoted poetry, wrote verse, wore long hair and was a striking figure. Naturally, most young ladies would be greatly interested in him; Miss Bird certainly was. I cannot think that Miss Bird was in love with Jim, but she may have been just the same. She refused to write anything concerning her Estes Park experiences for this book.

She was, I suppose, the first boarder in the Park. The following, from her book, are some of her experiences: "A log cabin made of big hewn logs. The chinks should be filled with mud and lime, but these are wanting. The roof is formed of barked young spruce, then a layer of hay, and an outer coating of mud, nearly all flat. The floors are roughly boarded. The living room is about sixteen feet square, and has a rough stone chimney in which pine logs are always burning."

She says that her room has "a stone chimney, a hay bed, a window that opens on a lake," and that "neither of my doors has a lock, and, to say the truth, neither will shut, as the wood has swelled." Of her landlord she wrote:

"Griff, as Evans is called, is short and

small, and is hospitable, careless, reckless, jolly, social, convivial, peppery, good-natured, nobody's enemy but his own—and a jolly good fellow. His cheery laugh rings through the cabin from early morning, and is contagious, and when the rafters ring at night with songs, what would the chorus do without poor Griff's voice? . . . He has a most industrious wife, a girl of seventeen, and four children, all musical, but . . . though he is a kind husband, her lot as compared with her lord's is like that of a squaw. . . . I pay \$8 a week, which includes the unlimited use of a horse, when one can be found and caught. . . . The regular household living and eating together at this time consists of a very intelligent and high-minded American couple, whose character, culture and refinement I should value anywhere; . . . a young Englishman . . . called the Earl; a miner prospecting for silver; a young man, the type of intelligent, practical young America, whose health showed consumptive tendencies . . . is living a hunter's life here; a grown-up niece of Evans; and a melancholy-looking hired man. . . . We never get letters . . . unless someone rides to Longmont for them. Two or three novels and a copy of *Out West* are our



My Home in the Rocky Mountains.

An illustration from Miss Bird's "A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains."

literature. Our latest newspaper is seventeen days old. Conversation at the table: The last grand aurora, the prospect of a snowstorm, track and sign of elk and grizzly, rumors of a bighorn herd near the lake, the canon in which the Texas cattle were last seen, the merits of different rifles, the progress of two obvious love affairs, the probability of someone coming up from the plains with letters, 'Rocky Mountain Jim's latest mood or escapade, and the merits of his dog, Ring, as compared with those of Evans' dog, Plunk, are among the topics which are never abandoned or exhausted."—October, 1873.

CHAPTER EIGHT

EARLY DAYS

Those who live pioneer lives are generally the most fortunate of people. They suffer from no dull existence. They are awake at all times, living in every atom of their being. Each hour is full of progressive thought. Their lives are full of new occasions that call for actions that are accompanied with the explorer's charm—actions that make their lives strong, sincere and sweet. Their days are full of eagerness and repose. They work with happy hands. They and the world are young. They are rich with hope and their future has all the promise of spring. The joy of home building is at its best when a log cabin rises in the wilderness. It means something to have no light but that flickering one from the rude fireplace which you have shaped with your own hands. To build a log cabin on the fresh wild mountain slope, and by its frontier fireplace explore the fairyland of enchanting thought, is indeed a blessing.

Early days in Estes Park gave a rare personality to its pioneers. Some of the good old

people are still with us, and if you like the picturesque frontier restored with the concise vividness of early days, just lead any of these heroic old timers to become reminiscent.

There is a sad incident of early settlement that came to a thrifty young German named George Bode. He homesteaded in the extreme north end of the park, finished a cozy rustic home, completing the interior with striking wood carvings, then sent passage money to Germany to the dear girl he left behind. She refused the money, saying she would pay her own way, but desired him to meet her in New York. He went to meet her, but the vessel on which she sailed with all on board went down at sea.

In the summer of 1876, a pioneer and his family came into the park with two teams. His oldest boy, Ed, drove the second team. Sitting up on the seat beside Ed was his dog, Shaver, whom Ed sometimes cruelly teased. Coming down Park hill Ed reached round and pinched Shaver, slackened the lines, and the stiff-necked mules, pushed by the heavy downhill load, began to trot. This caused a trunk just behind the seat to bounce open, and the end of Shaver's tail, that was sticking out be-



The Fringed Blue Gentian

hind, was caught by the lid as it came down. Shaver thinking that Ed was pinching too hard, grabbed him by the ear. Meantime the stiff-necked mules had increased their speed, and this caused a rapid bouncing of the lid on Shaver's tail. Shaver tried to keep time with these bouncings with snaps at Ed's ear, while Ed, more than busy with the rushing mules on the rough roads and unable to help himself with his hands, yelled at the dog, but this only frightened the mules, and Shaver got more busy than ever. The crisis was reached when household furniture, braying, frightened mules and a howling dog mixed up in a ditch.

On the 26th day of October, 1876, the first wedding occurred in the park at the Ferguson homestead cabin, where Rev. Coffman pronounced the marriage ceremony for Miss Anna Ferguson and Mr. Richard Hubbell.

The toll road from Lyons to the Park was completed in 1877, but in the nineties, after the charter of this road had expired, the company who had owned the road managed, through some technicalities of the law, not only to continue charging toll, but to increase the charges. Efforts of Estes Park people to have toll charging stopped, or at least to have the charge



COLUMBINE
Colorado State Flower

reduced, were unsuccessful. J. E. Blair refused to pay and tore down the toll gate. He was arrested and fined. He tore the gate down again, and, joined by Abner E. Sprague, at the expense of several hundred dollars and much annoyance, these two men fought the battle to a legal finish. The toll company was defeated and these two men deserve the honor of giving Estes Park a free road.

The first public school was held in one of the cottages in Elkhorn Lodge in the winter of 1881. Early in the eighties Mr. Cleave began to keep a few articles for sale, and early in the nineties Mr. C. E. Lester, who was keeping a good little summer store, issued a very creditable advertising folder concerning Estes Park.

In 1886, F. H. Chapin, the Appalachian climber, first visited Estes Park, and during that summer, and in the summer of 1888, he did much exploring on peak and in canon adjacent to the park. Many of his experiences around, and thoughts in connection with Estes Park, are delightfully told in "Mountaineering in Colorado."



Base Ball Game in 1889 Between the Kansas University and Estes Park Nines. Among the players are Gen. Frederick Funston, William Allen White, Governor Hadley, Howard P. James and C. E. Lester, One-fourth mile south of Estes Park postoffice.

AWFUL NIGHT IN A BLIZZARD

Lost Above Timberline Four Men and a Woman Are
Forced to Camp Without Fire in Cleft of Rocks
for Shelter from Terrible Storm.
(Special to the News.)

"Estes Park, Colo., Sept. 23, 1896.—The storm of Saturday and Sunday was a raging blizzard on Flattop trail, between Middle Park and Estes Park, and a party of four men and one woman, after losing the trail was compelled to spend the night above timberline, without a fire, and huddled together for shelter into a cleft in the rocks.

"F. P. Wolaver, A. W. Locke, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Sprague and James Cairns, started with their pack outfit from Grand Lake to Estes Park. They camped just below timber line on the west side of Flattop one evening, intending to cross over the next day. There were gusts of wind, glimpses of the moon between flying clouds, and finally a light fall of snow during the night.

"The morning was wintry, a poor one for trailing on the heights. Clouds were low and were swiftly flying across the range from west to east. Snow above timberline was whirling and drifting. But the campers were anxious to

cross, and occasional glimpses of the sun in the wintry sky, as they breakfasted, gave some promise of clearing weather. So they packed up and started. Three of the party were tenderfeet. Shortly the snow began falling thick and fast, and as they reached timber line they climbed up into the clouds, and it was cold, damp, and dark. Mr. Sprague, who had been over the trail in all kinds of weather, led the way. The trail was steep and slippery, and the summit some distance away. For a moment the clouds were broken and parted, and then they closed in again. It began to blow harder, but Mr. Sprague thought he could keep his bearings, so on they went. They were travelling with the storm. It began to snow harder, the wind became fiercer, the storm increased every minute. It was dangerous to go on, but it was impossible to return. Men could not, and stock would not, face such a storm. The trail was obliterated. Mr. Sprague depended on steering with an angle of the wind to keep on the right course. As soon as the party reached higher ground the wind, less obstructed and deflected, blew from a few points south of west. This was then unknown. No word was spoken for some time. The storm was so thick it was

impossible to see fifty feet in any direction. The animals were moving masses of snow and ice and were with difficulty kept together.

"Mr. Sprague could see nothing familiar, and told the party that he could not tell just where they were, and that the only thing to do was to keep moving and seek the first shelter.

"Suddenly a halt was called. They were on the brink of a precipice of unknown depth; the snow drifted over and disappeared. This precipice faced the south, and this told them that they were too far to the left. But they could not face the storm and get back to the trail.

"So they drifted before the wind along the brink of the precipice, looking for some hole to crawl into. Mr. Wolaver's hat blew off, and a handkerchief tied around his ears was soon covered with ice.

"After traveling for some distance along the brink of the precipice, they were stopped by a large mass of broken rock, which their animals could not cross. Thus cornered, all sought shelter behind rocks from the fearful wind and drifting snow, but the snow would whip around and dash all over them. All were soon terribly chilled. Here Mr. Sprague found a shelf on the

edge of the cliff. Here the wind could not strike, and all could breathe freely. In looking around they discovered a cleft in the wall of the precipice. This cleft was about twenty feet below the top, and was about eight feet long by six feet wide. They decided to occupy it. Mrs. Sprague was lowered into this with a rope, then the bedding and supplies lowered down to her. A tepee tent was last lowered, the rope was tied to the top of this, then made fast to the rocks above. All squeezed into the tent and sat down on the bedding. It was 1:30 p. m. They tried to eat their dry, cold lunch, but they had no water, and could not eat without it. They could hear only the fiercer blasts and the sifting of the snow on the tent.

"A few minutes past two o'clock the eastern sky cleared a little. The snow almost ceased, and the wind went down. They decided to leave and try for the trail. They hurriedly packed and hustled out of the cleft, and were just making a start, when the storm came on with greater fury than ever and drove them back for refuge to the cleft for the night. Such a refuge! A hole in a cold rock, into which they could all barely squeeze, far above timberline, without fire, and a blizzard raging. A slip, or if a slide

of snow struck them, headlong they would fall for a thousand feet. They were between a blizzard and a deep precipice!

"It was now 5:30 p. m. They ate a few mouthfuls of dry lunch. Their clothing was a sheet of ice. They wound blankets around themselves and prepared to dry their clothing with bodily heat. With much crowding and squeezing they managed to get into something of a reclining position, all forming a big wedge with all feet in a pile at the small end.

"A miserable, slow-going night was spent; cramps, cat-naps and reflection!

"At last the fires of sunrise gladdened all. The birds began to twitter along the cliff and the bell on the lead donkey was heard tinkling above. Only one could move at a time but at last all got into frozen boots. Once out on top again, they found the temperature warmer, but the storm was still severe. But to live they must leave the place. To move with the pack outfit was impossible. The only thing to do was to try to reach timber on foot. With this idea they started, taking only a small pack of eatables, a pair of blankets and a rope for descending ledges. They started, leaving the animals to their fate, working their way along

the face of the cliff, hoping they could find some gorge or gully by which they could descend to timber. They were facing the storm at an angle of forty-five degrees, traveling in the order of wild geese, the strongest in the lead, with pellets of snow driven by the wind, stinging their faces. At last they found a break and started down a trough in the cliff. It was very steep and filled with loose stones. They had to keep closely together, on account of danger from dislodged stones, which from time to time went swiftly, dangerously bounding far below. They slipped, slid and crawled, for an exciting and exhausting hour—when timber line, wood and shelter, was gained.

“This walking was a severe strain on Mr. Wolaver. He was sixty-seven years old, and accustomed to walking only in Lincoln Park and besides he was slightly crippled with an injured leg. During the night he had lain on the shovel, accidentally left beneath the bed. This had not helped his leg. To make matters worse, while all rested at timber line, he quenched thirty-six hours of thirst with ice water, which had sickened him, so that when all started forward again he had nothing in him but grit—but plenty of that.

"They were headed for Moraine, and, leaving the remainder of the party climbing over logs and breaking their way through the brush, Mr. Cairns and Mr. Locke hurried forward to procure horses and a wagon to send back for the stragglers at a point where they would emerge from the woods into the trail.

"That night, by a cheerful fireside, friends and relatives eagerly listened to their stirring story."

The same stormy day, September 23rd, Miss Kate Wamser, alone with the guide, made a most trying and plucky climb through the storm to the top of Long's Peak. This was a remarkable climb as it required extraordinary nerve and endurance. Even the horses could not be forced to go above timberline, so from this place Miss Wamser proceeded on foot and several times was blown off her feet by the fury of the wind. From Keyhole up the rocks were dangerously icy, while the roaring wind flung cruel, cutting icy pellets and made the traversing of the narrow places extremely perilous. "At what point were you most frightened?" asked the guide of Miss Wamser as they sat resting in a sheltered place on the summit. "At the place where you appeared about to say we must turn back."



IN ESTES PARK

The Denver papers tell that the first Fourth of July celebration in Estes Park was held in 1897. About one hundred and fifty people assembled near the present postoffice to see the flag raised, to enjoy the basket dinner and to listen to the orator of the day—Enos A. Mills.

In February, 1899, two trappers on Grand River ran out of provisions and started across the range for Estes Park. On the snowy summit they became almost snowblind, but managed to make their way down Horseshoe Park, where by accident they ran against a deserted cabin in which they spent the night. The next morning one was totally blind and the other very nearly so. Being unable to keep on the road, they followed Fall river. After hours of difficulty and danger they were attracted to the Hondins ranch by the barking of a dog. One February while snow shoeing across Flattop on the way to Grand Lake, Enos A. Mills, in the midst of a blinding storm, walked out upon a snow cornice which overhung a precipice. The cornice caved off, but he managed to catch upon a narrow ledge just under the top of the precipice; but it was a close call. Another winter a trapper from Grand River lost his way on Flattop during a storm and barely escaped

with his life, after a perilous climb down the precipitous icy walls west of Moraine Park. He spent a night in the woods where his hands and feet were badly frozen. He finally reached the home of Mrs. Arah Chapman the next day.



The Crater in Specimen Mountain

CHAPTER NINE

SINCE 1900

The long distance telephone line first connected the Park with the outside world in 1900. During the winter of 1900 a summer store kept by W. T. Parke became an all the year round store.

Early in the summer of 1900 a man, in burning some logs out of a trail on the eastern slope of Long's Peak, neglected the fire and it spread and killed more than a thousand acres of beautiful, valuable forest. During the same summer some campers left their camp fire burning when they departed and it wrought havoc among the forests on the South Fork and along the Flattop trail. Both fires resulted from inexcusable carelessness.

During the summer of 1902, Wind River Lodge was built and opened, Long's Peak Inn changed owners, and this year and each year since there has been a marked increase in the Park population.

January 6, 1903, is the date of a windstorm that did some damage, and September 7, the date of some earthquake shocks which caused



Scotch, the dog who accompanied Miss Brougham, playing ball

some confusion but no damage. Nineteen hundred and four saw the completion of the road along the Thompson River between the Park and Loveland. This is one of the most scenic roads in the state and was built largely through the efforts of C. H. Bond and F. P. Stover.

J. D. Stead became the owner of Sprague's in 1904, and the following February a six times a week mail service was commenced in place of the tri-weekly.

On August second, 1905, Louis Levings, who, with George Black was climbing down the face of Mount Ypsilon, fell and was killed by the giving way of the rock to which he was holding.

In June, 1906, the old Long's Peak Inn was burned. It was at once replaced by the present rustic structure.

This same year, 1906, Miss M. V. Brougham had a strenuous experience on Long's Peak. She climbed it without guide or companion, except "Scotch," a collie dog. Coming down from the summit she missed the trail and spent a cold, windy night among the crags beyond Keyhole at an altitude of 13,000 feet. Scotch knew the way and would have led her home, but she declined to follow him. Fortunately he stayed

with her. She hugged him all night but was badly chilled when the guides found her the following morning.

In 1907 an automobile stage line was established between the Park and Loveland; another one over the Lyons road in 1909. The automobile caused the picturesque old stage coach, that was so cruel to horses, to be laid aside. At first the people of the Park were almost unanimously, and many even bitterly, opposed to the automobile. But it was speedy and comfortable and from the beginning it brought increasing numbers of people to the Park and consequently has added to the Park's prosperity and development.

Among the hotels recently established are the Horseshoe Inn and the Timberline in 1908; Moraine Lodge in 1910 and the Brinwood in 1911. In 1910 the Western Conference of the Y. M. C. A. commenced extensive improvements upon the former Wind River Lodge property. The plan of the conference is to have conventions and to conduct a large summer school.

The above was written three years ago. The Western Conference of the Y. M. C. A. has proved a marked success. The attendance has rapidly increased from the start. Many of the

instructors and lecturers have been people of national and even international reputation. Every indication is that the school will continue to grow and improve.

In 1913 the Western Conference of Y. W. C. A. held a successful session in these grounds.

For years a number of people had vainly endeavored to acquire a lot in the neighborhood of the Estes Park postoffice. This was at last made possible by Mr. C. H. Bond who acquired a laid out townsite. The first lots were sold in the fall of 1905. The townsite was purchased from John T. Cleave, the best known of the old timers. He was an honest but eccentric Englishman who came to the Park in the early seventies and was postmaster for thirty years.

The automobile, better mail service, the telephone and the increase of land owners all combined to make changes in the customs of the Park. One old custom long enjoyed by the early settlers was an annual public dinner. This commonly was given in the school house on Thanksgiving. Everyone was invited and a few far-off settlers came sometimes as far as twenty miles to attend. Occasionally, a Denver visitor or a straggling tourist was fortunate enough to be present. Generally there was some sort of a program in addition to the dinner.



The Mariposa Lily

In effect, these dinners, like the old time log rollings, produced friendships and sympathetic, neighborly feeling; occasionally they promoted marriage.

During the winter of 1906-7, Mr. John Adams, idealist and the most original character in the Park, organized and presided over an entertainment society which met weekly. Parts of every program were excellent; often some one presented something that was thought-filled, original and suggestive. These refreshing entertainments were given to crowded houses and their general atmosphere was that of a good country literary society.

The epoch-making event in the history of the Park was the coming of Mr. F. O. Stanley. With Mr. B. D. Sanborn he acquired the old Dunraven land holdings. Upon his part of the land Mr. Stanley at once commenced the building of the Stanley and the Stanley Manor hotels. A half million dollars was spent in buildings and in the equipment of them. They were lighted with electricity and in them were installed the first electrical cooking plants.

The investment of a half million dollars in a modern hotel in the wilds twenty-five miles from a railroad startled the business world;



Harriet Peters, a little eight year old girl who climbed
Long's Peak almost unassisted.

this also gave the Park publicity far and wide and greatly hastened its development. This large and adventurous investment showed great confidence in the future of Estes Park, required nerve, good business sense, the capacity to see the recreation needs of the near future and also something more and greater than these. The Stanley was opened in 1909 and the Manor in 1910. Both are already on a good business basis.

In September, 1906, the Estes Park Protective and Improvement Association was formed with Mr. Stanley as President and Mr. C. H. Bond, Secretary. The aim of this association was the development of the Park through publicity, the building of roads and trails, the establishment and maintenance of a fish hatchery, the enforcement of the game laws and the protection of wild flowers. Most property owners at once became members.

Directly, as a result of the activities of this organization, a fish hatchery, which has placed several million young trout in our streams, was built and maintained. The High line road and the Prospect Mountain trail are the work of the organization. One of the best things accomplished is a development of a sentiment that is

protecting the big game. This organization condemned those who killed game out of season and it even discouraged hunting or shooting at any time. As a result, both mountain sheep and deer have become more numerous and tamer, and are frequently seen delightfully near the roadsides.

The wild flower notice posted by this association produced happy results. It has been copied by many civic bodies all over the United states. With the hope that it may be further useful it is reproduced in full.

"You can help keep Estes Park a beautiful wild garden.

SPARE THE FLOWERS!

Thoughtless people are destroying the flowers by the roots or picking too many of them.

Neither the roots nor the leafy stocks should be taken, and flowers, if taken, should be cut and not pulled.

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH AN ARM- FUL OF FLOWERS?

Those who pull flowers up by the roots will be condemned by all worthy people, and also by

The Estes Park Protective and Improvement Association.

Since the revision of this book three years ago the Estes Park village has increased in population. A number of permanent residents and summer visitors are endeavoring to beautify the village. In this connection it is an interesting point that the village has never had any organized form of government and is still without a mayor or councilman.

Each year brings more visitors than the preceding one. During the season of 1913 there were fifty thousand visitors to this region. More than one hundred private automobiles, representing twenty-two different states, have arrived in one day.

There are now six automobile stage lines, one each from Boulder, Ward, Longmont-Lyons, Fort Collins, and two from Loveland.

The old Dunraven hotel burned in 1911. This was built in 1878 by Lord Dunraven on a site selected for it by Albert Bierstadt, the artist. In 1913 the Rockdale hotel was built near Mary Lake and this year, too, the Rustic hotel was enlarged and its name changed to Lester's.

Through the co-operation of the residents of Estes Park and Grand Lake a road was surveyed across the Continental Divide between these places, and work commenced upon it in

1912. During 1913 a trail was opened into the magnificent Glacier Gorge, Loch Vale, region to the northwest of Long's Peak. It was in this region that the Colorado Mountain Club camped during its 1913 summer outing.

In the autumn of 1913 the Estes Park Woman's Club was organized. For years the ladies of the Park had been active in civic and other work. They helped to raise funds for the Fish Hatchery and for roads and trails. Just prior to the organization of the Club the ladies built the Deer Mountain Trail.

The Estes Park country is one of little snowfall, but in December, 1913, came the "big" record-breaking snowfall. The average depth was five feet. For two weeks transportation was suspended.

A numerous beaver population led trappers into this territory probably as early as 1841. By 1890 these animals were almost exterminated. About 1900, however, one or two local people commenced to urge beaver preservation. These primitive home builders are now on the increase. Beaver works old and new are found in a number of places; those in the Long's Peak valley, on the eastern slope of Long's Peak, in the western edge of Moraine Park and in Horseshoe Park are perhaps the most important.

During the past two years the number of sheep and deer have noticeably increased, and they have also become much tamer. These pleasant changes are largely due to the efforts of a few local people who for years have constantly discouraged hunting and shooting. During the spring of 1913, nineteen head of elk were brought in from Yellowstone Park, and eighteen additional ones were brought in the spring of 1914.

In 1909, Enos A. Mills commenced to urge that about six hundred square miles of the surrounding region be made the Estes National Park and Game Preserve. In September, 1909, a mass meeting of Estes Park people and a few outsiders, together with the members of the Association, unanimously endorsed this position.

The proposition progressed from the start and the press of the country gave it extraordinary publicity. In this connection, Mr. J. Horace McFarland, President of the American Civic Association, visited the Park in May 1910, and has enthusiastically endorsed the measure. The name of this proposition has been changed to the Rocky Mountain National Park. Efforts to secure it still go on.

The opposition to this measure has come

mostly from the Forest Service. The Service has misrepresented the facts and given insidious opposition. It may be well to record that the Forest Service, in order to harass the promoters of this Park, declared the slope of Long's Peak, up which the trail runs, to be grazing land and they authorized a stockman who did not hold property in his own name to pasture three hundred head of cattle on this slope. One of the statements circulated by the Forest Service was to the effect that the scenery in this proposed National Park was of a commonplace character and not at all fitted for Park use. This in face of the fact that during 1913 this region was visited by about fifty thousand people.

Mr. Robert B. Marshall, Chief Geographer of the United States Geological Survey, says of this proposed Rocky Mountain National Park region in his report in 1912 to the Department of the Interior: "This region as a whole is as beautiful as any to be found in the United States, or, indeed, in the world."

The measure is steadily winning friends among public-spirited citizens and the ultimate, perhaps early, establishment of this National Park is assured.

The extraordinary scenery and the delightful climate of this region probably will make it one of the most popular recreation places in all the world. With this we stop at "the perpetually moving spot where history ends and prophecy begins."



FOR REFERENCE

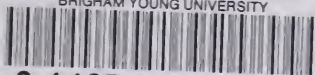
The most important sources of information concerning Estes Park region are the following:

A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains by Isabella L. Bird ;
A Ragged Register, by Miss Anna E. Dickinson ;
Mountaineering in Colorado, by Frederick H. Chapin ;
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